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ABSTRACT

This report is designed for educators who are involved in teaching, developing, or evaluating curriculum in the elementary schools. It describes the content and application of Florida's fourth grade writing test, and it offers suggestions that might be helpful in preparing students for the assessment. The 1990 Florida legislature mandated the assessment of student writing at grades 4, 8, and 10. Within each classroom, students are randomly assigned one of two writing prompts. Fourth graders respond to a prompt that asks them to explain something (expository writing) or tell a story (narrative writing). Students are asked to plan their responses and write them within 45 minutes. The report is divided into these sections: (1) "What Is Effective Writing?"; (2) "The Florida Writing Assessment Program"; (3) "Scoring Method and Rubric Used in 1999"; (4) "Expository Responses from the 1999 Assessment"; and (5) "Narrative Responses from the 1999 Assessment." The expository and narrative responses contain actual samples of student essays from the test. Eight appendixes contain supplemental information about the assessment and 43 recommended readings for educators. (SLD)

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FLORIDA WRITES!

Grade 4

Report on the 1999 Assessment

TM030426

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Florida Writing Assessment Program

FLORIDA WRITES!
REPORT ON THE 1999 ASSESSMENT

GRADE 4

FLORIDA WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

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Bureau of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
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PREFACE

Dear Educators:

In order to improve statewide assessment in Florida and to test students' writing achievement, the 1990 Florida Legislature mandated the assessment of students' writing in grades 4, 8, and 10. The Florida Writing Assessment Program was established in response to this legislative action.

The development of this assessment began in fall 1990. The Assessment and Evaluation Services Section of the Department of Education reviewed the latest advances in writing assessment and conferred with writing and curriculum consultants from Florida and from other states with established writing assessment programs. The Department, with the assistance of advisory groups of teachers, school and district administrators, and citizens, developed the writing prompts (topics) and the scoring rubric (description of writing at each score point) and selected student responses to represent each score point.

For this assessment, each student is given a writing folder containing a prompt. Students are given 45 minutes to read the prompt independently, plan their responses, and write their responses in the folders. A separate sheet is provided for planning and prewriting activities (e.g., outlining, clustering, mapping, and jotting down ideas). Within each classroom, students are randomly assigned one of two prompts. Fourth grade students respond to a prompt that asks them to explain (expository writing) or tell a story (narrative writing); eighth and tenth grade students respond to a prompt that asks them to explain (expository writing) or persuade (persuasive writing). See Appendix D for examples of the writing folder, planning sheet, and assessment directions given to students.

Florida Writes! Report on the 1999 Assessment, Grade 4 is designed for educators who are involved in teaching or developing or evaluating curriculum in the elementary schools. This publication describes the content and application of the grade 4 writing test, and it offers suggestions for activities that may be helpful in preparing students for the assessment.

If you have questions, please ask your school coordinator or district coordinator of assessment for assistance. Further, the staff of the Assessment and Evaluation Services Section is available to respond to questions concerning the writing assessment or this publication. Please write or telephone

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WHAT IS EFFECTIVE WRITING?

EFFECTIVE WRITING DESCRIBED

A well-written piece can best be described as incorporating elements of writing in such a way that a reader can experience the writer's intended meaning, understand the writer's premise, and accept or reject the writer's point of view. Effective writing

- focuses on the topic and avoids extraneous or loosely related information;
- establishes a clear organizational pattern (a beginning, middle, and end and transitional devices) that enables the reader to follow the flow of ideas;
- contains supporting ideas that are elaborated through the use of details, examples, vivid language, and mature word choice; and
- follows the conventions of standard written English (e.g., punctuation, capitalization, and spelling) and includes a variety of sentence structures.

ACHIEVING EFFECTIVE WRITING

The best way to teach writing is to engage students in the writing process. This recursive process includes planning, writing, revising, and editing.

As students become more proficient, the amount of time they spend on each step in the process may shorten, and the necessity for teacher involvement should lessen.

FLORIDA'S SYSTEM OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Florida's System of School Improvement and Accountability provides direct guidance for writing instruction. Of the seven goals set forth, Goal 3 - Student Performance, is of particular importance to the instruction of writing. As defined by Standard 2 of Goal 3, students will "record information in writing; compose and create communications; accurately use language, graphic representations, styles, organizations, and formats appropriate to the language, information, concept, or idea and the subject matter, purpose, and audience; and include supporting documentation and detail." The Sunshine State Standards support the use of effective writing as outlined in the Language Arts Writing Strand benchmarks, which identify the highest expectations for student writing as defined by score point 6 of the Florida Writing Assessment Program rubrics.

The competencies listed in Florida's System of School Improvement and Accountability are integral to all aspects of writing instruction and, with the Sunshine State Standards for language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, health/physical education, and foreign languages, form the basis of learner expectancies and lifelong writing skills.

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FLORIDA'S DIRECT WRITING ASSESSMENT

In the past decade, teachers, school districts, state departments of education, and national assessment programs have attempted to move away from multiple-choice tests and toward the direct assessment of writing proficiency. Direct writing assessment applies many of the principles used by exemplary teachers to develop effective writing.

In striving to standardize direct writing assessment, educators have discovered that large-scale assessments involve inherent limitations. While a classroom teacher has the luxury of making notes and adding personal comments on students' papers, this type of feedback is impossible in a large-scale assessment in which several hundred thousand student papers must be read and scored. On the other hand, the strength of a large-scale assessment is that all student papers can be judged against a common standard. The result is a source of statewide information that can be used to characterize writing performance on a consistent basis. This information can be used as one indicator of a writing instruction program's strengths and weaknesses.

Florida's direct writing assessment can best be described as demand writing. Demand writing assessments involve assigned topics, timed writings (e.g., 45 minutes), and scored responses. This kind of assessment has been used in classrooms (e.g., essay questions on a social studies test), in several large-scale assessments (e.g., National Assessment of Educational Progress [NAEP], the Scholastic Aptitude Test [SAT], the American College Testing Program [ACT], and Florida's College-Level Academic Skills Test [CLAST]), and by many employers during the job interview process. For a statewide assessment, demand writing involves less preparation time for students and teachers and less time and money for scoring than project or portfolio assessments. (See Appendix B for definitions of project and portfolio assessments.)

The Florida Writing Assessment Program has adopted demand writing as an efficient and effective method of assessing Florida's fourth graders. For this program, students are expected to produce, within a 45-minute time period, a focused, organized, supported **draft** in response to an assigned topic.

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE FLORIDA WRITING ASSESSMENT

The skill of effective writing cannot be taught in several easy lessons. By giving students frequent opportunities to express themselves, teachers and parents can enhance students' success in writing. A curriculum that consistently emphasizes reading and the use of spoken and written language in all subject areas and at all grade levels will increase students' ability to write effectively for a variety of purposes.

Appendix C contains suggestions for how district- and school-level administrators, teachers, and parents or guardians can help prepare students for the assessment.

THE FLORIDA WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

DESCRIPTION OF THE WRITING PROMPTS

The prompts for the 1999 assessment were carefully selected to ensure that the subject matter was interesting and appropriate for fourth grade students. In addition, prompts were reviewed for offensive or biased language relating to religion, gender, and racial or ethnic background.

The prompts were written with the assistance of members of the Fourth Grade Writing Assessment Advisory Committee and were pilot tested on a small group of students, then field tested on 1,000 students across the state. The development of the prompts is a continuing process. The Department will continue to write, review, pilot test, and field test additional prompts for measuring writing proficiency. See Appendix E for more information on the procedures used by the advisory committee to write and review prompts.

Prompts are written to elicit writing for specific purposes. For instance, expository prompts ask students to explain why or how, and narrative prompts direct students to tell a story or write about something that happened.

Prompts have two basic components: the writing situation and the directions for writing. The writing situation orients students to the subject about which they are to write. The directions for writing set the parameters for writing and, in the case of persuasive prompts, identify the audience to whom the writing is directed.

Example of an Expository Prompt

Below is an example of an expository prompt. The first component orients the student to the topic: jobs or chores. The second component suggests that the student think about various jobs or chores, then write about the reasons he or she does the job or chore.

Everyone has jobs or chores.

Before you begin writing, think about one of your jobs or chores.

Now explain why you do your job or chore.

Example of a Narrative Prompt

In the prompt below, the first component (the topic) focuses on an unforgettable experience. The second component of the prompt suggests that the student think about various experiences, then write about one that was unforgettable.

Everyone has done something that he or she will remember.

Before you begin writing, think about a time you did something that you will always remember.

Now tell a story about the time you did something that you will always remember.

SCORING OF THE SPRING 1999 ASSESSMENT

Students' papers were scored in April. Prior to the scoring session, members of the advisory committee met on two separate occasions to read student responses and to select papers to represent each score point. These papers were then used by the scoring subcontractor, Measurement Incorporated, to train the readers.

As a service to the districts, 40 teachers and school- and district-level administrators were trained along with the 200 readers who were hired to score the responses. The actual readers for the three-week scoring session were Florida residents who were required to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in education, English, or a related field and to satisfactorily complete the training session.

As part of the actual scoring session, readers first took part in three days of intensive training. Each reader scored one of the two types of writing. The scoring director and team leaders for each type of writing were responsible for training and assisting readers during the scoring. A scoring guide that contained the scoring rubric and example papers for each score point provided the basis for developing a common understanding of the standards recommended by the advisory committee. To ensure accuracy in the scoring, readers were required to adhere to the advisory committee's standards during the scoring session. Appendix F lists the potential reader bias issues discussed with the readers.

While the actual scoring was taking place, the scoring directors and team leaders verified the scores readers assigned to papers and answered the questions readers asked about unusual and unscorable papers. Additional methods used to ensure that all readers were adhering to scoring standards included having two readers score each student response and having readers score sets of papers that had been prescored by the advisory committee.

SCORING METHOD AND RUBRIC USED IN 1999

DEFINITION OF HOLISTIC SCORING

Holistic scoring is a method by which trained readers evaluate a piece of writing for its overall quality. The holistic method used in Florida requires readers to evaluate the work as a whole, while considering four elements: focus, organization, support, and conventions. This method is sometimes called focused holistic scoring. In this type of scoring, readers make a judgment about the entire response rather than focusing exclusively on any one aspect.

Focus

Focus refers to how clearly the paper presents and maintains a main idea, theme, or unifying point.

- Papers receiving lower and middle scores may contain information that is loosely related, extraneous, or both.
- Papers receiving higher scores demonstrate a consistent awareness of the topic and avoid loosely related or extraneous information.

Organization

Organization refers to the structure or plan of development (beginning, middle, and end) and the relationship of one point to another. Organization refers to the use of transitional devices (terms, phrases, and variation in sentence structure) to signal (1) the relationship of the supporting ideas to the main idea, theme, or unifying point and (2) the connections between and among sentences.

- Papers receiving lower scores may lack transitional devices and summary or concluding statements.
- Papers receiving higher scores use transitional devices (signals of the text plan or structure) and developed conclusions.

Support

Support refers to the quality of details used to explain, clarify, or define. The quality of the support depends on word choice, specificity, depth, credibility, and thoroughness.

- Papers receiving lower scores may contain support that is a bare list of events or reasons, support that is extended by a detail, or both.
- Papers receiving higher scores provide elaborated examples and fully developed illustrations, and the relationship between the supporting ideas and the topic is clear.

Conventions

Conventions refer to the punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and sentence structure. These conventions are basic writing skills included in Florida's Sunshine State Standards.

- Papers receiving lower and middle scores may contain some or many errors in punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and sentence structure and may have little variation in sentence structure.

- Papers receiving higher scores follow, with few exceptions, the conventions of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling, and use a variety of sentence structures to present ideas.

SCORE POINTS IN RUBRIC

The rubric further interprets the four major areas of consideration into levels of achievement. The rubric used to score papers in spring 1999 is shown below.

6 Points

The writing is focused on the topic, has a logical organizational pattern (including a beginning, middle, conclusion, and transitional devices), and has ample development of the supporting ideas. The paper demonstrates a sense of completeness or wholeness. The writing demonstrates a mature command of language including precision in word choice. Subject/verb agreement and verb and noun forms are generally correct. With few exceptions, the sentences are complete, except when fragments are used purposefully. Various sentence structures are used.

5 Points

The writing is focused on the topic with adequate development of the supporting ideas. There is an organizational pattern, although a few lapses may occur. The paper demonstrates a sense of completeness or wholeness. Word choice is adequate but may lack precision. Most sentences are complete, although a few fragments may occur. There may be occasional errors in subject/verb agreement and in standard forms of verbs and nouns, but not enough to impede communication. The conventions of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling are generally followed. Various sentence structures are used.

4 Points

The writing is generally focused on the topic, although it may contain some extraneous or loosely related information. An organizational pattern is evident, although lapses may occur. The paper demonstrates a sense of completeness or wholeness. In some areas of the response, the supporting ideas may contain specifics and details, while in other areas, the supporting ideas may not be developed. Word choice is generally adequate. Knowledge of the conventions of punctuation and capitalization is demonstrated, and commonly used words are usually spelled correctly. There has been an attempt to use a variety of sentence structures, although most are simple constructions.

3 Points

The writing is generally focused on the topic, although it may contain some extraneous or loosely related information. Although an organizational pattern has been attempted and some transitional devices have been used, lapses may occur. The paper may lack a sense of completeness or wholeness. Some of the supporting ideas may not

be developed with specifics and details. Word choice is adequate but limited, predictable, and occasionally vague. Knowledge of the conventions of punctuation and capitalization is demonstrated, and commonly used words are usually spelled correctly. There has been an attempt to use a variety of sentence structures, although most are simple constructions.

2 Points

The writing may be slightly related to the topic or may offer little relevant information and few supporting ideas or examples. The writing that is relevant to the topic exhibits little evidence of an organizational pattern or use of transitional devices. Development of the supporting ideas may be inadequate or illogical. Word choice may be limited or immature. Frequent errors may occur in basic punctuation and capitalization, and commonly used words may frequently be misspelled. The sentence structure may be limited to simple constructions.

1 Point

The writing may only minimally address the topic because there is little, if any, development of supporting ideas, and unrelated information may be included. The writing that is relevant to the topic does not exhibit an organizational pattern; few, if any, transitional devices are used to signal movement in the text. Supporting ideas may be sparse, and they are usually provided through lists, clichés, and limited or immature word choice. Frequent errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and sentence structure may impede communication. The sentence structure may be limited to simple constructions.

Unscorable

The paper is unscorable because

- the response is not related to what the prompt requested the student to do,
- the response is simply a rewording of the prompt,
- the response is a copy of a published work,
- the student refused to write,
- the response is written in a foreign language,
- the response is illegible,
- the response is incomprehensible (words are arranged in such a way that no meaning is conveyed),
- the response contains an insufficient amount of writing to determine if the student was attempting to address the prompt, or
- the writing folder is blank.

Appendix G contains instructional implications for each score point.

EXPOSITORY RESPONSES FROM THE 1999 ASSESSMENT

DEFINITION OF EXPOSITORY WRITING

The purpose of this type of writing is to inform, clarify, explain, define, or instruct by giving information, explaining why or how, clarifying a process, or defining a concept. Well-written exposition has a clear, central focus developed through a carefully crafted presentation of facts, examples, or definitions that enhance the reader's understanding. These facts, examples, and definitions are objective and not dependent on emotion, although the writing may be lively, engaging, and reflective of the writer's underlying commitment to the topic.

DESCRIPTION OF THE EXPOSITORY PROMPT USED IN 1999

The annotated papers in this section represent responses to a prompt that directed students to explain why a person is special to them. Students were asked to give an explanation that would enable the reader of their paper to understand why a person is special to them.

SUMMARY OF THE EXPOSITORY RESPONSES WRITTEN IN 1999

Students responding to this prompt generally provided reasons why a person is special to them. A paper was scorable if the student chose one special person and gave reasons for that choice. Papers that focused on the topic, displayed an organizational pattern, contained developed support (reasons), and generally followed the conventions of writing were scored in the higher ranges of the scale.

SUGGESTIONS FOR USE OF THE ANNOTATED RESPONSES

Each response in this publication is annotated to explain why it was assigned a particular score. Teachers may use the responses on the following pages to improve students' writing skills and to help students understand the scoring criteria. Teachers can also delete the scores and annotations and make transparencies or copies of the responses. They can then ask students to

- rank order the responses from highest to lowest scores;
- highlight words and phrases that provide an organizational structure and develop the supporting ideas in a response;
- list the strengths and weaknesses of a response;
- revise and edit a response based on either a student-generated list of the strengths and weaknesses or the annotation beneath the response. This activity might include improving the introduction and conclusion, adding transitional devices, providing more details and examples, refining the word choice, and varying the sentence structure; and
- use the rubric and skills above to score student responses to similar writing prompts.

Tonight is TU special: The Special Mom!

"Bet you can't guess who my special person is," I taunted while walking to school with my best friend. It's my Mom. I'm going to explain to you why my special person is my Mom.

One reason is that she's always helpful. Picture this- you're sitting down at your coffee table doing your homework. For some reason today you're having trouble in decimals. You throw your pencil down in disgust. You're Mom comes over and helps you. Get the picture? Well, if you do what you just imagined is like my special person, she's helpful. Back in the olden days, when I was about 3 or 4, I had trouble reading. But, my good old special Mom came to the rescue. I learned how to read in less than a week. Also, I play a sport, softball. When my Mom saw I wasn't hitting so good, she practiced with me everyday. Then, I was back to my good old homerun hitter self. If my Mom wasn't so helpful she wouldn't be so special to me!

Cough, Cough! Oh no I'm sick, thats okay, Mom's Whenever I'm sick my Mom is the best person to take care of me. She makes sure I have everything I need and more. Just the other day she tucked me down with medicine and food. The next day I was well again, what do I know? If I'm really ill, then Super Special Mom comes to the bedside to make me feel better. I know the whole routine, I get up, I'm sick, she scatters to the kitchen coming back with breakfast. Eggs, bacon, waffles... and a side of Dimetapp. My Mom always stays next to me when I'm sick While most Moms make their sick children stay in bed all day, mine lets me

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wander around the house. Usually, I end up in the livingroom laid on a couch relaxing watching the end of Muppet Babies. My Mom is so very special when I'm sick.

Last but not least, my favorite thing about my Mom being so special is she always takes my side. When My siblings and I get into fights, (truly, I really do think I'm the instagator) my Mom takes my side. One time my brother kicked me in the shin, so when I went to my Mom she made my brother go to his room. On Christmas morning, My family likes to open presents one at a time, one person at a time. She always makes a speech about me opening them first because I'm the youngest. Ahh! My special person always gets me off the hook when I'm going to have to clean. Then my brother and sister quarrel over that I dont have to do anything. Speech time. My special person is really special when she takes my side.

In conclusion, now you should know what a sweet life I have and what a quintessinte, special person I have. My Mom. Sorry to leave but got to go spend quality time with my special person.

Score Point 6

This response is focused and organized. The logical organizational pattern and ample support contribute to a sense of completeness. Each reason is elaborated with specific details and personal anecdotes: "On Christmas morning, my family likes to open presents one at a time, one person at a time. She always makes a speech about me opening them first because I'm the youngest. Ahh!" A mature command of language with precise word choice is demonstrated: "I know the whole routine, I get up, I'm sick, she scatters to the kitchen coming back with breakfast. Eggs, bacon, waffles . . . and a side of Dimeatapp." Sentence structure is varied, and few convention errors occur.

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My sister is the greatest. Since she is older than me she is a very special person. She saved my life when I was a toddler. Also, when I am with her I always happy. Last, she is the only one who understands me. My sister deserves a gold metal.

First, my sister saved my life when I was a toddler. One day when I was four, I was running by the pool. It was real fun until I slipped on a slick rock and plunged into the deep end of the pool. I kicked and screamed untill I was blue. I felt like I was in the Atlantic Ocean. No one was there. To me it looked like I was the only person in miles. Suddenly, I heard a splash and my sister grabed my dress and pulled me to safety. My sister saved the day. This is one reason why my sister is special.

Next, every time I am with her I am happy. If I have had the worst day and there is no hope of me being happy, she is a bright ray of sunshine to me and my smile would be so big that it would strech from eye to eye. Last week, for example, I had such a bad day at school. I a

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rotten bully pushed me into a patch of cold wet mud and I got a C- on a math test that I studied weeks for. When I came home I wanted to stay in my room for years, but my sister took me outside, played my favorite game, and told the funniest joke I had ever heard. The smile she gave me lasted for days. This is another reason why my sister is special.

Finally, she is the only one who who understands me. If I ask an adult a queston they just look at me like I was talking another language. Yesterday at lunch, I was getting school food and asked can I have 2 scopes of macaroni. The women just staired at me. Then my sister came up and told the woman that I wanted dubles. My sister is the greatest.

To conclude, my sister saved my life, always cheers me up, and is the only one who understands me. I think it is safe to say that my sister is the best person in the world to me.

Score Point 6

This response is focused and organized. The logical pattern of organization and ample development of support contribute to a sense of completeness. Support is consistently developed with specific details: "A rotten bully pushed me into a patch of cold wet mud and I got a C- on a math test that I studied weeks for. When I came home I wanted to stay in my room for years, but my sister took me outside, played my favorite game, and told the funniest joke I had ever heard." A mature command of language and precise choice of words are demonstrated: "Suddenly, I heard a splash and my sister grabed my dress and pulled me to safety" and "If I ask an adult a queston they just look at me like I was talking another language." Sentence structure is varied, and conventions are generally followed. However, occasional spelling errors occur.

I have someone very special to me. It could be my brother, my friend, my cousens, my dad or many more, but its not. The most special person in the world is my mom. I choose her because she plays fun games with me, when I am worried she makes me feel better, and she makes me lugh.

My first reason why she is really special is because she plays fun games with me. My mom and I pldy Trouble and I always win. We also play Hangman. Sometimes I outsmart her. She thinks I know the word when I do, but I pretend I don't. So when it is her turn she can't think and then it is my turn and I make my move and win. When we play life she never loses even though she is as slow as a turtle.

Another reason my mom is dear to me is because when I am worried she makes me feel much better. She tells me its okay. My mom askes me what is the worst that can happen to me. She also belives that I can

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do it. All of those make me feel much better!

My last reason why my mother is so special to me is because she make me laugh. She tells funny jokes like I speak 2 languages.... English and American. That always cracks me up like someone was tickling my feet with a feather for a couple of hours. My mom can also make all these funny voices and my favorite one is the girls voice where she sayse like after each word that comes out of her mouth.

Now you know why my mom is special. She plays fun games with me, when I am worried she makes me feel better, and she makes me laugh. Who is special to you?

Score Point 5

This response is focused, and an organizational pattern is evident. The reasons provided in the second and fourth paragraphs are elaborated with personal anecdotes: "She tells funny jokes like I speak 2 languages . . . English and American. That always cracks me up like someone was tickling my feet with a feather for a couple of hours." Further explanation, possibly a personal example, is needed for the "when I am worried" reason in the third paragraph. Word choice is adequate, sentence structure is varied, and conventions are generally followed.

To receive the highest score, this response needs more consistent support and more precise word choice.

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Everyone has someone special in their life! I have someone very special in mine! The special person in my life is my little brother, . He is special to me because he looks up to me and wants to do everything I do, he plays with me and is always so generous to me, and he helps me get better when I am sick.

To begin, is a special person because he looks up to me and wants to do everything I do. When he is having trouble with something or can't do something by himself, he knows I am right beside him like a mother bird watching her chicks. He wants to be like me also. He sings and loves to dance with me. We sing and dance to all kinds of C.D's. We have alot of fun! I love the way he wants to be me, and looks up to me!

Next, My brother loves to play with me, and he's always nice and kind to me. and I will play his favorite board game Chutes and Ladders. We would have a blast! If I ever did something that doesn't want me to do, he wouldn't yell and scream at me, he would calmly tell me not to do that. is always nice to me and loves to play!

Finally, will take care of me when I am sick. He will get his pretend doctor toys and put them on me. He will take his stethescope and check my heart. He takes my temperture, and makes me drink alot of fluids. With Alex being my doctor I know I will have a grin on my face as wide as the stars stretched out over the night sky very soon!

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is the most special Person in my life!
First, He wants to do everything I do and he looks up to me,
Second, he is alway generous to me and plays with
me, and Third when I'm sick he will take care of me!
is the number one special person in my life,
He will always have a special place in my heart!

Score Point 5

The writing focuses on the topic and includes a topical organizational pattern (a brief introduction, a middle section including reasons why the author's little brother is special, and a summarizing conclusion). Support is adequately and consistently developed. Each reason is elaborated with some specific details: "Finally, will take care of me when I am sick. He will get his pretend doctor toys-and put them on me. He will take his stethescope and check my heart." However, further explanation is needed for a higher score. For example, why does the little brother want to imitate the author? The command of language and word choice is adequate, but at times mature and precise: "When he is having trouble with something, or can't do something by himself, he knows I am right beside him like a mother bird watching her chicks." Sentence structure is varied, and conventions are generally followed.

To receive the highest score, this response needs more consistent elaboration of support, more mature command of language, and more precise choice of words.

23

The person who is special in my life is my best friend She is tall, skinny, and may I mention very pretty. We love to do things togethner. We go shopping, we have sleepovers, and have fun! She is a great friend, and I can be different in some ways too. For instance she is tall and I am short. I wear glasses, and she doesn't. And I am more michure than she is. She goes wacko sometimes and just sort of spazes out which makes her look emichure.

Some ways that we are alike are: We both Love Winnie the Pooh, We both like boys, we love to shop and things like that. But the main reason she is special to me is because she is nice. She will always be there for me and she will always be my friend. She will make me feel better when I feel bad. And thats what I look for in a friend.

But one thing good about her being emichure is that she makes me laugh. It is just majorly funny! One time she made me laugh so hard that I fell out of my chair! But the bad thing about it was that it was embarassing. But it was still funny!

After I read what I had to write about, I was going to put my other friend →

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. But she is not the one I wanted to write about. She is mean and she yells and hurts me. She comes up to me and scratches me For no reason at all, And would never do that. That's why is my special Friend.

Score Point 4

The response is focused on the writer's best friend. The writer attempts to use a comparison and contrast strategy to organize the writing. The second and third paragraphs list ways that the writer and the best friend are different and alike. The fourth paragraph gives additional information about the best friend's immaturity: "But one thing good about her being emichure is that she makes me laugh. It is just majorly funny! One time she made me laugh so hard that I fell out of my chair! But the bad thing about it was that it was embrassing. But it was still funny!" Support is more consistently developed in this response than in most score point 3 responses, but more elaboration is needed for a higher score. For example, in a higher score point response, the writer would provide a stronger connection between the friend's immaturity and the friend's funny behavior. What at first appears to be loosely related information in the conclusion is presented as further proof that this friend is special. Word choice is adequate, sentence structure variety is attempted, and knowledge of the basic conventions of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling is demonstrated.

For this response to receive a higher score, support needs to be elaborated, main ideas and supporting details need to be linked, word choice needs to be refined, and convention errors need to be corrected.

I have someone that is very special. This person is my Dad. He's special because I love him very much, I don't love him more than god or my mom. But I think I love him more than almost anybody be cause he provides almost everything for me and my family.

My dad is a pretty cool guy too He does have dentures but that doesn't make my dad uncool. Because he does look funny when he takes them out. My mom hate's it when he take's them that's why he does it. My dad drives a truck and sometimes he'll take me with him. We get to go all over the U.S.A. It's so much fun.

I've been all over the country I'v been to Nevad, Washington, New Mexico and New Hampshire, I love going to all these places.

Once I went to bed in Arizona and woke up in Texas. You see my dad is a very hard worker. If his company say's he has to be some where, Then my dad is going to be there.

Lot's of time's when he's gone for long period's of time. When he comes home he has presant's for me

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and my brother. I love my dad.
Now I've told you about the
Special person in my life.

Score Point 4

The writing is focused and organized through the use of an introduction, a conclusion, and a middle section consisting of three reasons and some effective transitional devices ("Once," "You see," "If," and "When"). Development of the support is uneven. The first and third reasons are simply extended with little bits of information, but the second reason is elaborated: "My dad drives a truck and sometimes he'll take me with him. We get to go all over the U.S.A. It's so much fun. I've been all over the country I'v been to Nevad, Washington, New Mexico and New Hampshire. I love going to all these places. Once I went to bed in Arizona and woke up in Texas. You see my dad is a very hard worker. If his company say's he has to be some where, Then my dad is going to be there!" Word choice is adequate, and sentence structure is varied. The paper demonstrates a sense of completeness because it is organized and contains some specific support. Errors in conventions and spelling do not interfere with meaning in this draft.

More elaboration of support, better choice of words, more sentence structure variety, and better control of conventions would improve this response.

Do you want to know who is special in my life? It's my dad. The reason I like my dad and he is special to me is he plays with me a lot, takes me places and tucks me in bed a special way.

The frist thing he does is plays with me. He will take me to the park or, my dad will play games with me like tag, borad games, and other things. Some of the borad games are monopoly, trobble, checkers, and bingo. Those are a lot of thing he plays with.

The second thing my dad does with me is takes me places. Like Saleabraion Station, Jungle Gardens, and to the wonderful beach. At Jungle Gardens we saw all kinds of fish and animals.

The thrid thing my dad does special is tucks me in bed a special way the special way is like a crisals or a cacun. It's so tight I think I'm going to burst.

Well now you know why I like when he plays games, when he

takes me places, and he has a special way of tucking me in. Now don't you think I have a special dad?

Score Point 3

This response is clearly focused on Dad as the special person in the writer's life. A restricted organizational pattern is evident, but the minimal development of supporting ideas prevents this response from receiving a higher score point. The second and third paragraphs are extended by lists and vague information. "The second thing my dad does with me is takes me places. Like Saleabraion Station, Jungle Gardens, and to the wonderful beach. At Jungle Gardens we saw all kinds of fish and animals!" What were the special adventures the writer had with his or her dad? Why was going with Dad more special than going with others? More elaboration is needed. The writer provides more specific support in the fourth paragraph, but this support is limited. Word choice, sentence structure, and conventions are adequate.

More development of supporting ideas would enhance this response.

29

Special person

Everyone has someone special in their life in my life that person special is my mom. She is important to me.

First reason

I go to the mall with her to by some cloths for her and me. We go shoping in Target, Walgreens, and Toys R' Us to get one or two toys.

Second reason

we go to birthday party's together. The last one we went together was 's birthday it was a blast.

Third reason she is my mom, my best, best friend. She is my best friend because we go everywhere together and that is very fun and exciting and friends do that to they go everywhere together.

Those were some reason's why my mom, my friend is special to me. I hope sometime in my life maybe she could take me somewhere special

like France, Maine, or even to California.
Wow. That would be really fun. Maybe
in one of those three places she could
meet a boyfriend.

Score Point 3

The response is clearly focused on why the writer's mom is special. An organizational pattern is attempted; however, what appears to be three reasons is actually a list of three places the writer goes with Mom: "First reason I go to the mall with her to by some cloths for her and me . . . Second reason we go to birthday party's together . . . Third reason she is my mom, my best, best friend. She is my best friend because we go everywhere together . . . ." Vague extensions are provided for each reason. More information is provided in the conclusion: "I hope sometime in my life maybe she could take me somewhere special like France, Maine, or even to California. Wow. That would be really fun. Maybe in one of those three places she could meet a boyfriend." The writer needs to provide more elaboration for each reason. Word choice is limited, but errors in sentence structure and conventions do not impede communication.

An effective pattern of organization, extension and elaboration of support, precise choice of words, and improved sentence structure and basic conventions would improve this response.

There's this person that is special to me. Everyone does like you and me.

First, he is fun to play with, kind, funny, weird, sweet, gentle, generous, giving and otherwise he is just like me.

Next, this person is special to me because we enjoy the same things like football, gymnastics, soccer, lizards, birds, fish, and other animals to.

Then, he always cheers me up, writes to me, plays with me, laughs with me, sings with me, and screams with me because screaming is cool to us.

Who's the person that is so special to ya? These are the reasons why is so special to me.

Score Point 2

The writer focuses on a special person. An organizational pattern is attempted through the use of vague and ineffective transitions ("First," "Next," and "Then"). The writer fails to use these transitions to provide a logical presentation of reasons. Brief extensions are given for why the friend is special: "Then, he always cheers me up, writes to me, plays with me, laughs with me, sings with me, and screams with me because screaming is cool to us." Why is screaming cool to the writer and to his or her friend? What prompts the screaming? Vague and general lists are provided as development for each reason. Word choice is limited, but conventions are generally correct.

To achieve a higher score, the writer needs to provide an effective organizational pattern, elaborated support, and more precise word choice.

My Special Person

My special person is because he's honist, he's nice and he's cool.

First, because his honist. If he borrows money from me he pays me back. I can tell him something and he won't blab it out.

Next, because he's nice. I like nice people.

Last, because he's cool. He also has a cool bike. He's as cool as a remote controle car.

In closing, who's your special person.

Score Point 2

The writing is focused. An organizational pattern is attempted through the use of a brief introduction and conclusion and a middle section consisting of a list of reasons why the person is special. This list could be rearranged in any order and retain the same meaning. Each reason is extended with a little bit of additional information. The third reason ("Last, because he's cool") includes an unsuccessful attempt to use figurative language ("He's as cool as a remote controle car"). Elaboration is needed on each reason to enhance the reader's understanding. Word choice is limited, but errors in sentence structure and conventions do not impede communication.

An improved organizational pattern, effective transitional devices, elaborated support, refined word choice, improved sentence structure, and corrected conventions are needed for a higher score.

My mom is someone special. She is like a friend who is nice to me. I have lot of special pelppel. She is like a very special prsen who loves me. She has a very special harte. She is so special to me. I think she is someone very special I love her.

The End

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Score Point 1

The writing minimally addresses the topic and provides little evidence of an organizational pattern. Sentences could be rearranged in any order and retain the same meaning. Supporting ideas are not developed. Three bare reasons are listed for choosing Mom as the special person: "She is like a friend who is nice to me . . . She is like a very special prsen who loves me. She has a very special harte." Extraneous information is also included: "I have lot of special pelppel." Word choice is limited and vague. The words "she" and "special" are repeated throughout the response. Simple sentence constructions are used, but spelling errors do not impede communication.

To receive a higher score, this response needs a clear focus, an effective organizational pattern, elaborated support, precise word choice, and correct spelling.

I am writing to explain
why this person is
Special in my life.
my reasons are Reason
one he made things, my Second
Reason is. She is a good
parent and my last Reason
is careful For me.
my Frist Reason is
god he helps pepole my
next Reason is god.
he made things. my Second
Reason is She put a roof
over my Head My next
is she is a good
parent. My last reson is
my Dad nice and Helpful
my next one is careful
For me. I hope you
injoyed reading why
This person is Speci/
in your life
my reasons are my
mom, god and Dad In my
opinion these are th three
most inportant reason
Because I Love all
three.

Score Point 1

The writing needs a stronger focus. The writer confuses reasons ("my reasons are my mom, god and Dad") with topic choices. There is no organizational pattern. The writer's use of "my Frist Reason . . . my Second Reason . . . My last reson" impedes communication. Reasons are presented randomly and could be rearranged in any order and retain the same meaning. Connections are not made between the reasons presented and the supporting details: "my reasons are Reason one he made things, my Second Reason is. She is a good parent and my last Reason is careful For me." Even though the special people in the writer's life are named in the last paragraph ("my reasons are my mom, god and Dad"), the writer fails to connect the special people to the reasons for choosing them. There is little development of support. Word choice is limited, and errors occur in capitalization, punctuation, sentence structure, and spelling.

To receive a higher score, this response needs to provide a clear focus, an effective organizational pattern, a strong connection between the reasons and the supporting details, elaborated support, precise word choice, varied sentence structure, and correct conventions and spelling.

one day I was board so I watch TV
They had coocking chanel I said so ill try
out for coocking lessons.

First Ill bake brownless. Turn the oven
to 300dg then get the mixture pore it
into the brownless cups and put crisco oil
on the pan that you put the brownies in
slide the brownies in the oven and lieve them
in for about 10 or 15 minutes then while thats
coockin Ill start on somthing else.

Why the brownies are coocking Ill
coock a stuff turcky. First ill go bug
a turkey the buy some staffin first I
check on the brownies yep they are
finish now I stuff the turkey put the
oven on 400dg then slide [illegible] for
about 25 minutes whill I doing
that ill watch TV for the rest of
the day

Unscorable

This response is unscorable. The writing does not indicate that the writer read and attempted to respond to the prompt.

NARRATIVE RESPONSES FROM THE 1999 ASSESSMENT

DEFINITION OF NARRATIVE WRITING

The purpose of this type of writing is to recount a personal or fictional experience or to tell a story based on a real or imagined event. In well-written narration, a writer uses insight, creativity, drama, suspense, humor, or fantasy to create a central theme or impression. The details all work together to develop an identifiable story line that is easy to follow and paraphrase.

DESCRIPTION OF THE NARRATIVE PROMPT USED IN 1999

The annotated papers in this section represent responses to a prompt that directed students to tell a story about walking through an open doorway. The students were asked to write a story about what happened when they walked through the doorway.

SUMMARY OF THE NARRATIVE RESPONSES WRITTEN IN 1999

Students responding to this prompt told a story about what happened when they walked through the doorway. A paper was scorable if the student wrote a story about what happened when he or she walked through the doorway. Papers that focused on the topic, displayed an organizational pattern, contained developed support (details), and generally followed the conventions of writing were scored in the higher ranges of the scale.

SUGGESTIONS FOR USE OF THE ANNOTATED RESPONSES

Each response in this publication is annotated to explain why it was assigned a particular score. Teachers may use the responses on the following pages to improve students' writing skills and to help students understand the scoring criteria. Teachers can also delete the scores and annotations and make transparencies or copies of the responses. They can then ask students to

- rank order the responses from highest to lowest scores;
- highlight words and phrases that provide an organizational structure and develop the supporting ideas in a response;
- list the strengths and weaknesses of a response;
- revise and edit a response based on either a student-generated list of the strengths and weaknesses or the annotation beneath this response. This activity might include improving the introduction and conclusion, adding transitional devices, providing more details and examples, refining the word choice, and varying the sentence structure; and
- use the rubric and skills above to score student responses to similar writing prompts.

When the Door Opened

Every day I passa locked door. The door has mysterious gothic symbols, shocked screaming faces and vicious dragons carved into the well finished brown wood. One day, the door knob turned in my hands, and the door opened. The following is what happened the day when the door opened.

It all started on a warm summer day. My friends and I were playing soccer at Lila's house. Then Sue kicked the ball way up through a high window in the old abandoned mansion next door to Lila's house.

The faces of all the girls swiveled and all eyes were on me, so I stammered "I'll try and get the ball. Don't be angry if I do not retrieve it; the door is always locked and who knows what is in there."

In a sparkling field of piercing silence, I strode over to the carved door. I cautiously twisted the rusty brass knob and the door opened. Inside was a tiny square white room with a cracked ceiling and carpet as white and soft as a lamb's wool. I leaned on the wall, finding myself watching the cracks for movement. The wall then swung open.

I ran in shock through a huge white labyrinth that seemed everlasting and infinite. The maze of crooked corners narrowed to two wide corridors. I decided to go left. I walked for a while, and Roar! a scaly green dragon breathing sparks of hot fury in the air was

standing ready for dinner. I saw his red eyes glared
how he snarled. On fire was everywhere! His tail
whipped and thrashed and yellow spikes tried to
wrap me up like a take out box. I ran in despair, only to find myself
lost again. I followed a path of clear crystals and
found myself enveloped in extreme wealth.

Jewels encrusted a box nearby that opened
to reveal bright green gems. The walls and floor were glistening
pure gold and a ceiling of silver stars overlooked
the joyous scene. I grabbed a green gem and before
extremely I wore the purple robes of a mideval princess. I
skipped in delight out of the room, and crystalline
arrows pointed away, hopefully out or to the
soccer ball.

Dismay fell in a rain of fiery heat. I let
goof my precious jewel and it hit the angry dragon in the head
He melted! As spike fell into my tarnished arms shiny silver
and became a soccer
ball. I saw the magic door, but now a smiling
princess holding a gem was carved into the door's face.

As I exited, the mansion disappeared, except
the door remained standing. I gave Julie the
soccer ball and danced home, too proud to play
soccer. I must admit I was horrendously conceited
~~conceited horrendously~~
after that for a week, but I learned a valuable
lesson which was: If you love to volunteer,
you will acquire quite amazing things. My amazing
things were the adventure of a lifet, more appreciative friends.

Score Point 6

The writing is focused on the topic, has a logical pattern of organization, and has ample development of the supporting details. The writer skillfully weaves an ordinary soccer game into this story about a door with "mysterious gothic symbols, shocked screaming faces and viscious dragons carved into the well finished brown wood." The stage is set when the writer bravely volunteers to retrieve a soccer ball from behind the "carved door" in the old, abandoned mansion and cautions friends, "Don't be angry if I do not retrieve it; the door is always locked and who knows what is in there." Events are elaborated with specific details; however, a particular strength of this response is the mature command of language and precise word choice: "I ran in shock through a huge white labyrinth that seemed everlasting and infinite. The maze of crooked corners narrowed to two wide corridors." Sentence structure is varied, and few convention errors occur.

Last Summer when my sisters and I were at my grandpa's for a couple weeks, because my mom and dad were on a buesness trip, I always went by a door, looking at my grandma's old party dresses. Every time I saw the door it was locked. One ~~Stormy~~ Cold and ~~cold~~ stormy night the door was unlocked.

As I twisted the door knob carefully it opened with a soft sgeak. I didn't want to go in but something, that I saw bulged me forward. As I walked in, the door slamed behind me. I turned around in surprise! I tried to open the door, but it was locked. What I saw shocked me. In the room ~~is~~ there ~~where~~ was a meadow with tall grass that went above my ancles. There were tiny faries that looked like large bees. It was beautiful. Deers siped the water out of a crystal clear stream, with pebies of all different colors. As I looked down at myself I wasn't in my regular cut off shorts and skimpy red shirt. I had one of my grandma's party dresses on with some high black shoes. What happened next almost made me faint.

Suddenly the grassy meadow became a hard wooden dance floor. The deers became men and women dressed in there best. The faries became little children

dancing on stage. Everyone around me was dancing. A man came and scooped me and started dancing with me. At the stroke of midnight everything changed.

I found myself in the attic with my cut off's on and my red shirt again. I had remembered everything that happened, I just didn't know why! I was having so much fun and it just all went away. But at my feet lay a book. With a cover that was blue and golden words reading "The Hidden Door". I picked up the book and went downstairs by the fire place.

After a couple weeks I finished the book and found that there was only one chapter and everytime I go into the hidden door another chapter adds on. I decided not to tell anyone about this. I don't think the world is quite ready!

Score Point 6

This writing is focused and has a logical organizational pattern. An imaginative introduction sets up a mystery surrounding "grandma's old party dresses" and a locked door. After finding the door unlocked, the writer notices that "I wasn't in my regular cut off shorts and skimpy red shirt. I had one of my grandma's party dresses on with some high black shoes." Events are elaborated with specific details: "Suddenly the grassy meadow became a hard wooden dance floor. The deers became men and women dressed in there best. The faries became little children dancing on stage. Everyone around me was dancing." A mature command of language, including precision in word choice, is demonstrated. The conclusion contains a surprising twist to the story line: "After a couple weeks I finished the book and found that there was only one chapter and everytime I go into the hidden door another chapter adds on." Sentence structure is varied; however, there are occasional run-on sentences and spelling errors.

The Secret Passage.

Everyday I passed a door that seemed to always be locked. Oneday it was unlocked. I would like to tell you about it.

While I was walking down an old bridge a door I had seen locked before was now standing wide open! I peered into it and yelled, "Is anyone in there?" Instead of a clear voice answering a gurgling sound arose from the passage. I slowly climbed through the icy frame. It looked like a huge ice palace! I looked around and saw a huge wooly mamoth, a few dinosaurs, and a sabor tooth tiger! I directed and focused my eyes on the beautiful sabor tooth tiger. Its' ears were bent back and its fur was rough. Even though his eyes were a burning red his teeth fasinated me most of all. I started looking at the brachiasaurus and he then made the same gurgling sound as the one I heard from outside. The brachiasaurus was a dull gray color. His skin also looked rough. Shortly after I examined him I looked at the mamoth. His fur was a light brown and his tusks were an ivory color. I started

to walk around the palace
then I stopped. The animals were
frozen solid! I wanted to run but
I felt like I weighted 300
pounds! I grabbed a flashlight
out of my backpack and looked
around. While shining my flashlight
I noticed that my light was
trembling upon the walls. I
lowered the light and ran toward
the door I pushed it as hard
as I could and it flung open
sending me flying. I closed it
back up and stuck a piece of
sharp ice into the keyhole. I then
ran home. To this day noone
in the world knows about it.
Except you.

That was my story about
the door that always seemed locked
until now.

Score Point 5

This response is focused, and its organizational pattern provides for an easily paraphrased story line. Most events are elaborated: " I slowly climbed through the icy frame. It looked like a huge ice palace! I looked around and saw a huge wooly mamoth, a few dinosaurs, and a sabor tooth tiger!" A mature command of language and a precise choice of words are demonstrated: "I pushed it as hard as I could and it flung open sending me flying. I closed it back up and stuck a piece of sharp ice into the keyhole." However, some events are unexplained: "Even though his eyes were a burning red his teeth fasinated me most of all. I started looking at the brachiasaurus and he then made the same gurgling sound as the one I heard from outside." Why was the writer fascinated by the tiger's teeth? What caused the gurgling sound, and what was its connection to the story? Sentence structure is varied, and conventions are generally correct.

More elaboration of events and stronger connection between events are needed for a higher score.

There is a very mysterious house in my neighborhood that I walk by every day on my way to school. The mysterious part is, no one lives there and the door is always locked.

One day, I was doing my normal routine, walking to school, and I decided to see if the door was unlocked. The steps creaked as I walked up to the old house and reached for the door knob. I slowly turned it, and to my surprise, the door was unlocked!

I pushed the door open with my fingertips, and I saw the most beautiful place I had ever seen. There was a large valley with hills and slopes covered with magnificant flowers of all kinds. Roses, Tulips, Black-eyed Susans. They were beautiful! But then I saw something that surprised me even more. There were unicorns gracefully galloping across the land like a river flowing through a mountain. But one unicorn seemed to be staring right at me and asking me to follow it. I walked to the unicorn and jumped on its back. As soon is I was settled, the unicorn started taking me to a forest with sounds of birds and other animals.

The unicorn's long mane blew in my face and tickled my nose. Finally, we reached the edge of the forest, and the unicorn slowed its pace to a steady trot. We went deep, deep into the forest, until finally, the unicorn stopped in front of a dark cave. I dismounted the unicorn and walked into the cave. Then, suddenly, I heard a loud voice calling my name. " ! !"

The next thing I knew, I opened my eyes and I was lying in my soft bed. My mom was leaning over me calling my name "Come on, ! You'll be late for school." It was all a dream. Just a dream.

That morning, when I walked by the mysterious house, I just smiled to myself and thought, "Maybe it was real after all."

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Score Point 5

The writing focuses on the topic, and its organizational pattern provides for a progression of events. The writer explains why the neighborhood house is "mysterious" in the introduction: "The mysterious part is, no one lives there and the door is always locked." Support is developed through extension and elaboration, and the writer uses description sparingly and effectively to create visual images: "There was a large valley with hills and slopes covered with magnificant flowers of all kinds. Roses, Tulips, Black-eyed Susans. They were beautiful. But then I saw something that surprised me even more. There were unicorns gracefully galloping across the land like a river flowing though a mountain." Word choice is precise, at times: "tickled my nose" and "slowed its pace to a steady trot." However, the response moves too quickly from the cave to the dream. Sentence structure is varied, and conventions are generally correct.

More elaboration of events is needed for a higher score.

45

After I walked through the open door I saw a baby dragon. I said "Hello" and the dragon said, "Hello" by that I knew that the dragon was kind and gentle. The dragon had a piece of bread with him. I asked him, "Can you toast that piece of bread beside you?" The dragon answered with a yes. So the dragon then toasted the piece of bread. Then I ate the delicious piece of toast. I asked the dragon if he had ever killed anyone. His response was No. and he also promised that he never would.

Then I asked him if he had a name. The dragon replied, "No I do not have a name." I asked, "May I name you?" "Yes" answered the dragon. "I think your name should be..... Hm! ... maybe, Patrick." The dragon replied, "I am fine with the name Patrick."

Patrick was lots of different colors. He was green with purple, orange, yellow, red, pink, blue, magenta, and black speckles over him. Patrick had blue eyes. Patrick had a long green tail, his tail was just plain green though.

Then since we both liked

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each other, we decided to become best buddies forever and ever Patrick and I almost always played together. When I asked my mom if I could keep Patrick she said yes. I am so glad. But Patrick's chore was to cook from then on.

Score Point 4

This response is tightly focused on finding a dragon behind the unlocked door. While an organizational pattern is evident and transitional devices are used to signal the progression of main ideas, the writer pauses only briefly to develop the supporting ideas. In a higher score response, the friendship that formed between the writer and the dragon would be elaborated: "Then since we both liked each other, we decided to become best buddies forever and ever Patrick and I almost always played together." The writer describes Patrick's character through a series of conversations with the baby dragon: "After I walked through the open door I saw a baby dragon. I said, 'Hello,' and the dragon said, 'Hello,' by that I knew that the dragon was kind and gentle. The dragon had a piece of bread with him. I asked him, 'Can you toast that piece of bread beside you?' The dragon answered with a yes." Sentence structure is varied, word choice is adequate, and conventions are generally followed.

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More development of supporting details would improve this response.

It was a dull Monday morning. I was walking down the school hall when I saw an unlocked door. Who would think this would be a one of the best days I ever had?

I walked past a door that I always walked past but I noticed something different about it. It was unlocked. I ran to get my friend to see if he would go into the door with me.

I found him and we went back to the door. We stepped in and found that we were surrounded by books. I took one of the books down and saw it had a picture of the world on the front. I realized it was my social studies book. When I looked in it I saw it had all the answers in it. We looked in other books and they were the same.

We walked out and bumped into a teacher. He asked us why we were in there and how we got in. We told him it was unlocked

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and we decided to go in. Next we
thold him what we saw in There.
The next thing we knew he was
jumping for joy. We asked him
why and he said that the
door had been locked for
2 years. They knew the books
were in there but they could
not get them out.
The next week me and
each got a plaque.
Now you know why that day
was so special to me.

Score Point 4

This response is focused, and an organizational pattern is demonstrated. Support is unevenly developed. The events surrounding finding the books are elaborated: "We stepped in and found that we were surounded by books. I took one of the books down and saw it had a picture of the world on the front. I realized it wac my social studies book. When I looked in it I saw it had all the answers in it. We looked in other books and they were the same." However, most events are simply extended: "I ran to get , my friend to see if he would go into the door with me. I found him and we went back to the door." The writer moves too quickly from finding the books to ending the story: "The next week me and each got a plaque. Now you know why that day was so special to me." Word choice is adequate, sentence structure is varied, and conventions are generally correct.

More development of supporting details and better choice of words would improve this response.

Every day I pass a door that is always locked. One day the door is unlocked, and I walk through. On the other side of the door I see a lot of toys and a lot of dirt. As I walked farther inside I find toys covered inside a blanket. I walk farther and I think that this room never ends. I come back closer to where the toys were, and I take some back to my house and see if I would like them. The next day, I went back to that same place to explore. I went farther into the room where I found a little boy who had been living there. I said, "Hello."

He said, "Hello." Then we talked and knew each other quite well and became friends. I left and asked a person working there if the door would always be locked. The worker said, "Why no." Then I asked why it was locked before. he said, "Because we were doing construction over there." I said, "Ok" and left. So from that day on, I could always see the little boy who lived in the room across my street.

Score Point 3

This response is focused on the topic. The organizational pattern includes an introduction, conclusion, and transitional devices. Main ideas are not adequately developed; events are simply extended rather than elaborated: "The next day, I went back to that same place to explore. I went farther into the room where I found a little boy who had been living there. I said, 'Hello.' He said, 'Hello.' Then we talked and knew each other quite well and became friends." Earlier in the story, the writer finds toys behind the door, but no connection is made between the toys and the little boy. Did the little boy play with the toys? Did the writer return the toys to the new friend? The story line moves too quickly from finding the toys to making a new friend to talking to the construction worker. The writer needs to pause and elaborate the events and provide stronger connections between the events. Word choice is adequate, sentence structure variety is attempted, and conventions are generally correct.

Elaborating all events in the story line and providing stronger connections between the events would improve this response.

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Have you seen a door that been lock, everyday and oneday it was unlock?, I have.
It all happened at school, it was a room locked every day and one day it was unlocked. Then I walked through I didn't see nothing. Then my teacher said time for lunch and I ran out. My teacher said, why are you breathing so hard?
Soon after lunch I went back. I was in the room, and I looked around. Then I heard a meow, meow but I didn't know where the sound was coming from. I went toward the closet and open it, it was three little lion cubs.
I went to the class with the cubs and my teacher said where did you get those? I said I found them. She said they was her cubs for show and tell, then she let every body hold them.
If I was you and I saw an unlock room I would open it and see what's inside the room.

Score Point 3

The response is focused, and an organizational pattern has been attempted. However, transitions are used ineffectively ("Then" and "Soon after lunch"), and the story line moves too quickly through time: "It all happened at school, it was a room locked every day and one day it was unlocked. Then I walked through I didn't see nothing. Then my teacher said time for lunch and I ran out. My teacher said why are you breathing so hard?" The writer needs to pause and provide some specific details to enhance the reader's understanding. What was the student's reaction when the lion cubs were found? Where did the teacher get the lion cubs? There are errors in sentence structure, and word choice is limited and predictable, but convention errors do not impede meaning.

An improved organizational pattern, effective transitional devices, elaborated support, refined word choice, improved sentence structure, and corrected conventions are needed for a higher score.

If a door is unlocked when its usually locked and I walked through on the other side there would be a Jungle. I would look through the Jungle Some of the things I found were animals like tigers, snakes, birds, and many more. I would also find plants and trees I didn't reconize. "So now," I said to myself "I know what was behind that locked door. I walked around a little more. Suddenly I walked through the door way. I was out of the jungle. Now every time I walk by that door It's locked.

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Score Point 2

This response is focused, and an organizational pattern is attempted. Most events are bare; however, the "things I found" event is extended with little bits of information: "I would look through the Jungle. Some of the things I found were animals like tigers, snakes, birds, and many more. I would also find plants and trees I didn't reconize." Word choice is limited, but there is an attempt to vary sentence structure. Knowledge of conventions is demonstrated.

Development of the story line, elaboration of the events, precision in the word choice, and correction of the basic convention errors are needed to improve this response.

I allwase walk by this dor
and its allwse locked. Well one day
it wasint so I opend the dor and.
thair was an old chest. When I opend
it at first it was old chloths
that they used in moives. Then at
the verry botem was picters. I
broght the chest to my mother.
She said that it was my
grandmother. She was a movy
star. She was famous!

Score Point 2

The response is focused on the topic, and an organizational pattern is attempted. Most events are bare; however, the "grandmother" event is extended with little bits of information: "I broght the chest to my mother. She said that it was my grandmother. She was a movy star. She was famous!" Word choice is limited, and sentence structure is simplistic. Knowledge of conventions is demonstrated, and errors in spelling do not interfere with meaning.

To receive a higher score, this response needs an improved organizational pattern, elaborated support, refined word choice, varied sentence structure, and corrected convention and spelling errors.

One day I walk pass a door that is always locked and the next day the door was unlocked. I open the door and I saw Mrs. was talking to my gramother and I did no the noise what they said. So I went back out the hallway. So my gramother in the offic with Mrs. a long time. Also I saw my friend in the hallway going to the offic to check in or chlck out. So the next day my gramother out of the offic at 12:00 p.m.. I was at my house to play a long time a go and I am ten year old.

Score Point 1

This response is focused, but it does not exhibit an organizational pattern. What starts as a story line involving Mrs. and the grandmother becomes somewhat confused when the friend appears: "Also I saw my friend in the hallway going to the offic to check in or check out. So the next day my gramother out of the offic at 12:00 p.m.." What role does the friend play in the chain of events? Support consists of a bare list of events. Word choice is limited and vague, and errors occur in sentence structure. Errors in basic conventions do not impede communication.

Development of the organizational pattern, elaboration of the support, precision in the word choice, and correction of the sentence structure and basic convention errors are needed to improve this response.

After I opened the door I saw a room with candy and cakes. The cakes came in all different sizes and shapes. So did the cookies. The candy glittered with suger. But the best of all was the choclate cake. Covered with fudge and wallnets. The cookies came in different flavors too. The suckers were in a lot of colors and flavors.

Score Point 1

This response minimally addresses the topic, and little organization is evident. There is no identifiable story line. Support consists of a list of foods found behind the door: "The cakes come in all different sizes and shapes. So did the cookies. The candy glittered with suger." Even though the foods are described, this list-like description is not woven into a story line. Word choice is limited, but there is some sentence structure variation. Knowledge of conventions is demonstrated.

Providing a clear focus, developing an organizational pattern, extending and elaborating the support, refining the word choice, and correcting the sentence structure and basic convention errors would improve this response.

What I would like to plan is to make things cleaner. First I would plan to clean the river and the Ocean up. Next by helping Cleaning the river and the ocean We would have to not throw paper or cans or things that don't belong in the water. So when you see trash or anything in the water try to get it out. We have to keep our river and ocean clean in order for the animals to live. If we keep our river clean maybe our city will stay clean too. So remember keep the river and ocean clean. The animals will die if we don't keep our city clean. If you want the animals to live you must keep keep the river and ocean clean. Remember let's keep our River and ocean clean. I want it clean because I want the river and ocean looking clean not durty. So everyone let's try it, let's try to keep our city, river and ocean looking beautiful. So anywere you see paper or trash, or cans pick it up and put in the recycling bin so it can get recycled. If we keep our river and ocean Looking beautiful maybe the animals and reptiles will live longer than they usually do. If we try to get the city more cleaner our people and our animals will not die all the time like they use to do. We Would'nt have to clean everything if we had'nt thro

Unscorable

This response is unscorable. The writing does not indicate that the writer read and attempted to respond to the prompt.

APPENDIX A

MEMBERS OF THE FOURTH GRADE WRITING ASSESSMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE 1998-1999

David Alfonso
Teacher
Manatee County

Kay Broughton
Language Arts Specialist
Escambia County

Kathy Dixon
Resource Teacher
Alachua County

Leslie Evans
Area Center for Educational Enhancement
Rollins College

Molly Everett
Teacher
Sumter County

Tammy Farlin
Resource Teacher
Gadsden County

Etta Harbin
Educational Specialist
Miami-Dade County

Denise Haymes
Dean of Students
Flagler County

Laird Parsons
Teacher
Brevard County

Pam Poore
Resource Teacher
Hernando County

Art Tweedy
Teacher
Osceola County

Linda Wiltz
Resource Teacher
Orange County

Sandra Wolfe
Testing Coordinator
St. Lucie County

Carol York
Language Arts/Reading/Title I Supervisor
Hillsborough County

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APPENDIX B

GLOSSARY

Census Writing Assessment – testing of all students in a particular grade level to measure the writing proficiency of students and schools

Conventions – commonly accepted rules of edited American English (e.g., spelling, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and sentence variety)

Draft – preliminary version of a piece of writing that may need revision of details, organization, and conventions

Expository Writing – writing that gives information, explains why or how, clarifies a process, or defines a concept

Field Test – testing a representative sample of the state's student population to determine the effectiveness of an assessment instrument

Focus – relationship of supporting details to the main idea, theme, or unifying point

Loosely Related – only slightly related

Extraneous – not related

Holistic Scoring – method by which trained readers evaluate the overall quality of a piece of writing

Narrative Writing – writing that recounts a personal or fictional experience or tells a story based on a real or imagined event

Organization – structure or plan of development (beginning, middle, and end) and the transitional devices used to arrange ideas

Transitional Devices – words, terms, phrases, and sentence variations used to arrange and signal the movement of ideas. For example, "next, and then, in the end, another reason, after that we went, another way to look at" are transitional devices.

Conclusion – statements or sentences used to conclude a paper

Persuasive Writing – writing that attempts to convince the reader that a point of view is valid or that the reader should take a specific action

Portfolio Writing Assessment – collection and scoring of various writing assignments produced during a semester or school year

Production Writing Assessment – measure of a student's performance on a task that requires a written response to a prompt

Project Writing Assessment – a multi-day cooperative planning and rewriting process that involves the teacher or peers or both

Prompt – writing assignment that states the writer's task, including the topic and purpose of the writing

Rangefinders – student responses used to illustrate score points on the rubric

Reader – person trained to score student responses

Response – writing that is stimulated by a prompt

Rubric – scoring criteria at each score point of the scale

Support – quality of details illustrating or explaining the central theme

Bare – use of simple lists that focus on events or reasons. For example, "I like to go to school because it is fun."

Extended – use of information that begins to clarify meaning. For example, "I like to go to school because it is fun when the teacher allows us to do experiments with frogs."

Elaborated – use of additional details, anecdotes, illustrations, and examples that further clarifies meaning. Information that answers the question, "What do you mean?" For example, "I like to go to school because it is fun when the teacher allows us to do experiments with frogs instead of just reading about frogs in books. Experiments allow us to have the fun of discovering for ourselves how far and fast frogs can jump and what kinds of food frogs like to eat." The elaboration could also provide a detailed description of the experiments.

Writing Process – recursive steps of prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, evaluating, and sharing that are used in the development of a piece of writing

APPENDIX C

SUGGESTIONS FOR PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE FLORIDA WRITING ASSESSMENT

The assessment of writing, by its nature, incorporates the assessment of higher-order thinking skills because students are required to generate and develop ideas that form the basis of their written responses. Instructional programs that emphasize higher-order thinking skills in all subjects and grade levels will have a positive influence on students' writing proficiency.

Research indicates there is a strong relationship between reading and effective writing. Studies show that an active reader, one who analyzes passages and makes logical predictions before and during reading, uses the higher-order thinking skills associated with effective writing. Active readers prepare for reading by using illustrations, titles, and subheading cues and by analyzing passages through self-questioning, predicting, skimming, and summarizing.

Research on the ability to write effectively shows that improvement in writing can be made only when students receive feedback or explanations about their writing. For example, if a student is not told that effective writing creates images in a reader's mind, then a student will continue to simply list rather than elaborate reasons or events.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISTRICT- AND SCHOOL-LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS

Administrators have the unique opportunity to directly influence the establishment and maintenance of writing programs. Administrators can provide leadership to writing instruction programs by

- ensuring that *Florida Writes! Report on the 1999 Assessment, Grade 4* is available to all elementary teachers;
- bringing teachers together to discuss how to use *Florida Writes! Report on the 1999 Assessment, Grade 4;*
- establishing a literacy program that sets high standards for writing across all subject areas and grade levels;
- bringing teachers together to discuss the possibilities of requiring writing in all subject areas and grade levels;
- assisting teachers in developing school-level writing expectations and assessment programs, such as portfolio assessment or schoolwide assessment of writing samples;
- scheduling inservice writing instruction and holistic scoring workshops for teachers and parents;
- emphasizing that writing should not be used as punishment;
- providing a print-rich environment in every classroom;
- including reference materials on writing in the schools' professional libraries; and
- publishing and celebrating students' writing.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Teachers' daily contact with students gives teachers many opportunities to directly influence students' attitudes toward writing. Instruction in writing should regularly involve the full writing process, including prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. Displaying or publishing written materials helps students experience writing successes.

Real-world writing often requires demand writing (writing a response to a topic in a short period of time); therefore, writing instruction should include having students independently read a topic, plan a response, and write a response within a specified time frame.

Teachers can prepare their students for the writing assessment through a number of teacher-generated activities, including having students

- write responses to questions as an alternative to selecting correct responses on a multiple-choice test;
- read passages and generate written summary questions.
- write their views on current events before or after the events have been discussed in class;
- critique written pieces (e.g., published works and student writings);
- read and analyze different types of writing (e.g., biographies, science fiction, fantasies, historical accounts, speeches, and news reports);
- write letters to a newspaper editor to explain their views on a particular issue or to refute the views of another person;
- write stories about real or imagined events;
- write descriptions of how things look, smell, taste, sound, and feel;
- write endings for unfinished fictional and nonfictional stories;
- write personal anecdotes and incorporate them into writing that either explains or persuades;
- discuss how text would be different if illustrations were included; and
- maintain subject-area portfolios to document progress.

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Parents' and guardians' daily contact with children provides them with the unique opportunity to be involved with their children's education inside and outside the classroom. Parents and guardians can encourage their children's writing by

- talking about what the children have read and written at home and at school;
- having their children write letters to friends and relatives;
- writing notes to their children with instructions for chores;
- speaking with teachers about the children's writing development;
- talking with the teachers and with the children about writing portfolios;
- promoting writing for a variety of purposes in their children's school curriculum;
- displaying stories, essays, or other written work at home on the refrigerator or a bulletin board; and
- demonstrating the value of writing in real-life situations (e.g., letters to the editor of the local newspaper; letters of inquiry, complaint, or application; and letters to family and friends).

APPENDIX D

EXAMPLES OF THE ASSESSMENT DIRECTIONS, WRITING FOLDER, AND PLANNING SHEET

ASSESSMENT DIRECTIONS

For this assessment, test administrators read to students the following directions:

Today you are going to do a writing exercise that will provide us with important information about students' ability to write. It is important for you to do as well as you can.

You may use the planning sheet for jotting down ideas and planning and organizing what you will write. The prompt on page 2 of your writing folder explains what you are going to write about and gives you some ideas for planning your writing.

After using your planning sheet to plan what you will write, begin the writing that will be scored on page 3 of your folder. You may continue your writing on page 4 of your folder. You do not have to fill up both of these pages, but you should be sure that you completely respond to the prompt on page 2 of your folder.

You may skip lines as you write in your folder, but remember that this will shorten the space in which you have to write.

Your writing may be about something that is real or make believe, but remember, you are to write ONLY about the prompt on page 2 of your folder.

You may give your writing a title if you would like, but you do not have to title your writing.

You may NOT use a dictionary. If you do not know how to spell a word, sound the word out and do the best you can.

You may either print or write in cursive. It is important to write as neatly as possible.

The writing in your folder should be easy to read and should show that you can organize and express your thoughts clearly and completely.

I cannot read your prompt to you or help you plan what to write. You must read and plan yourself. Remember, you must first read your prompt and then plan what you will write.

You have a total of 45 minutes to read, plan, and respond to your prompt. I will let you know when you have 10 minutes left.

If you finish early, please revise and edit the writing in your folder.

NAME _____

DISTRICT _____

SCHOOL _____

This is a secure document. Do NOT throw this folder away!

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	M

Florida Writing Assessment Program

GRADE 4 CENSUS 1999

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER/ FLORIDA STUDENT NUMBER IDENTIFIER

DISTRICT/SCHOOL NUMBER

RACIAL/ETHNIC BACKGROUND

- White (not of Hispanic origin)
- Black (not of Hispanic origin)
- Hispanic
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Multiracial/Multiethnic

SEX

- Male
- Female

LANGUAGE

- English
- Spanish
- Other

BARCODE SECURITY ID # AND DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION STUDENT

- (A) Educable Mentally Handicapped
- (B) Trainable Mentally Handicapped
- (C) Orthopedically Impaired
- (F) Speech Impaired
- (G) Language Impaired
- (H) Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- (I) Visually Impaired
- (J) Emotionally Handicapped
- (K) Specific Learning Disabled
- (L) Gifted
- (M) Hospital/Homebound
- (N) Profoundly Mentally Handicapped
- (O) Dual-Sensory Impaired
- (P) Autistic
- (Q) Severely Emotionally Disturbed
- (S) Traumatic Brain Injured
- (T) Developmentally Delayed
- (V) Other Health Impaired

LEP

Receiving ESOL services for:

- 2 years or less
- More than 2 years

SECTION 504?

- Yes

ESE AND LEP MODIFICATION TYPE

- Student Tested Indiv. or Small Group
- Student Tested in Several Sessions
- Student Given Additional Time
- Student Used Mechanical Device(s)
- Student Used Large Print Folder
- Student Used Braille Folder
- Proctor Transcribed Response
- Proctor Read Prompt
- Proctor Signed Prompt
- LEP Student Received Assistance in Heritage Language
- LEP Student Used Approved Dictionary

Note: Check the barcode to the left to see if this writing folder is preidentified. All grids for which information was received have been properly noted in the barcode and cannot be changed on this document. Any missing demographic information CAN be handgridded to complete this student's information. If any preidentified information for this student is incorrect, this writing folder should be invalidated and a new (blank) document should be handgridded. If NO student information is contained in the barcode, then this is not a preidentified writing folder and all information MUST be handgridded.

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TOPIC

Everyone has jobs or chores.

Before you begin writing, think about one of your jobs or chores.

Now explain to the reader of your paper why you do your job or chore.

DO NOT WRITE ON THIS PAGE

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State of Florida
Department of State
1998

STUDENT'S NAME _____

PLANNING SHEET

(Remember, use this sheet for planning what you will write. The writing on this sheet will not be scored. Only the writing on pages 3 and 4 of the writing folder will be scored.)

APPENDIX E

PROMPT SPECIFICATIONS AND COMMITTEE EVALUATION FORM

SPECIFICATION FOR NARRATIVE WRITING PROMPTS

Purpose of prompt specification – To ensure that all prompts tell the students the subject (topic) and purpose of writing.

Definition of narration – It is writing that recounts a personal or fictional experience or tells a story based on a real or imagined event. Narrative writing is characterized, as appropriate, by insight, creativity, drama, suspense, humor, or fantasy. The unmistakable purpose of this type of writing is to create a central theme or impression in the reader's mind.

Cue terms to use in narrative prompts are "tell about," "tell what happened," or "write a story." Narrative prompts should avoid the term "why" because it tends to elicit expository writing.

Introduction

Prompts contain two types of statements: Writing Situation and Directions For Writing. Each element of the prompt may be one or several sentences long.

Writing Situation

The writing situation statement directs the student to write on a specific topic described by a key word or phrase. This topic, established by a key word or phrase or the student's narrowing of it, serves as the central theme of the student's written response. The statement provides examples or definitions of the theme. The intent is to provide a common understanding of the meaning of the theme by expanding, restating, or clarifying it for the student. The intent is not to preclude the student's narrowing or restating of the theme to suit his or her own plan. An example is

Everyone has had a day he or she will never forget.

Directions for Writing

The directions for writing actually include a strategy statement that is intended to suggest an approach for those students who might have some difficulty getting started. It provides the beginning of a possible plan for the writer's piece. The directions for writing should begin with a phrase such as, "Before you begin writing, ..." An example is

Before you begin writing, think about a special day.

Now write a story about what happened on your special day.

SPECIFICATION FOR EXPOSITORY WRITING PROMPTS

Purpose of prompt specification – To ensure that all prompts tell the students the subject (topic) and purpose of writing.

Definition of exposition – It is writing that gives information, explains how or why, clarifies a process, or defines a concept. Though objective and not dependent on emotion, expository writing may be lively, engaging, and reflective of the writer's underlying commitment to the topic. The unmistakable purpose of this type of writing is to inform, clarify, explain, define, or instruct.

Cue words that should be used in expository prompts are "why," "how," and "what."

Introduction

Prompts contain two types of statements: Writing Situation and Directions For Writing. Each element of the prompt may be one or several sentences long.

Writing Situation

The writing situation statement directs the student to write on a specific topic described by a key word or phrase. This topic, established by either a key word or phrase or the student's narrowing of it, serves as the central theme of the student's written response. The statement provides examples or definitions of the theme. The intent is to provide a common understanding of the meaning of the theme by expanding, restating, or clarifying it for the student. The intent is not to preclude the student's narrowing or restating of the theme to suit his or her own plan. An example is

> *Everyone has jobs or chores. These may be things people do because they are asked to do them or because doing the job or chore makes people feel good about themselves.*

Directions for Writing

The directions for writing actually include a strategy statement that is intended to suggest an approach for those students who might have some difficulty getting started. It provides the beginning of a possible plan for the writer's piece. The directions for writing should begin with a phrase such as, "Before you begin writing, ..." An example is

> *Before you begin writing, think about why you do one of your jobs or chores.*
>
> *Now explain why you do one of your jobs or chores.*

COMMITTEE EVALUATION FORM

Purpose of Writing _____

Prompt Number _____ Grade Level _____

Interest Level of Prompt

1. Will students find the topic interesting? Yes ____ No ____
2. Will students be able to relate to the topic? Yes ____ No ____

Bias in Prompt

3. Is the topic of the prompt biased? Yes ____ No ____
4. Is the wording of the prompt biased? Yes ____ No ____
5. Is the prior knowledge required to write on the topic biased? Yes ____ No ____
6. Will the prompt tend to elicit responses that are unduly emotional or in some other way difficult for readers to fairly judge? Yes ____ No ____

Purpose of Writing

7. Are the requirements of the prompt clear? Yes ____ No ____
8. Will the prompt tend to elicit writing in the desired purpose of writing? Yes ____ No ____

Wording of Prompt

9. Is the wording of the prompt misleading? Yes ____ No ____
10. Are the syntax, vocabulary, and readability of the prompt appropriate for the majority of students? Yes ____ No ____

Organization of Response

11. Will the prompt tend to elicit listing-type responses or clichés? Yes ____ No ____
12. Is the prompt at fault for over-suggesting a method of organization? Yes ____ No ____
13. Will the prompt fail to suggest a method of organization? Yes ____ No ____
14. Will students be able to fully respond to the prompt within the designated testing period? Yes ____ No ____

Should the prompt be part of the prompt pool? Yes ____ No ____

Reviewer's signature _____

Date _____

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APPENDIX F

READER BIAS

Reader bias refers to personal factors that have no basis in the scoring criteria or rubric, but have an effect on a reader's perception of a student response. Readers are trained to avoid these biases because research indicates that biases can interfere with the consistent application of the scoring rubric.

1. **Appearance of Response**. How does the paper look at first glance? Handwriting, neatness, and margins are not part of Florida's scoring criteria.

2. **Length of Response.** How long is the response? Quality, not quantity, is part of Florida's scoring criteria.

3. **Fatigue of Reader.** How many responses has the reader scored? Each student will receive a score, and the score must reflect the scoring standards and not the reader's fatigue.

4. **Repetition of Responses.** How many responses have looked a great deal alike? In spite of the sameness of some responses, each response was written by an individual student who will be receiving a score report.

5. **Clashes with Content.** Has the student used vulgar or violent content? Is the response mundane? A reader's agreement with a student's point of view or use of language is not part of Florida's scoring criteria.

6. **Reactions to Style.** Does the student begin sentences with "And" or "But," use an informal tone, use the first person, use clichés, place the thesis statement in the conclusion rather than in the introduction, or use one-sentence paragraphs? Is the reader unduly influenced by the use of one well-turned phrase in what otherwise is a nonillustrative response? Florida's scoring criteria do not mandate a particular style.

7. **Reactions to Perceived Personality of the Writer.** Does the student come across as brash, shy, cute, honest, willing to take a chance, or being like the reader was at that age? Readers are scoring the words written in the folder, not the student's personality. Personality is not part of Florida's scoring criteria.

8. **Reactions to Writing Criteria from Other Assessments or to Previous Experience with Writing Instruction.** Does the reader have personal reactions to the scoring criteria for other states' or grades' responses, the issue of the developmental appropriateness of the rubric, or the soundness of the administration of the assessment? Before being used statewide, the prompts and rubrics of the Florida Writing Assessment Program were developed by advisory committees of Florida educators and citizens and were verified by use with hundreds of students. The administration procedures and scoring standards were analyzed and validated by the committees. The reader's role is to score the responses according to the scoring criteria rather than to react to the administration procedures or the scoring criteria.

APPENDIX G

INSTRUCTIONAL IMPLICATIONS FOR EACH SCORE POINT

GRADE 4

6 Points

According to the rubric, the writing is tightly focused, logically organized, and amply developed. It demonstrates a mature command of language, including precision in word choice. Sentences vary in structure, and conventions are generally correct.

A score of 6 does not mean that the paper is perfect. In most cases, the writing could be improved by instruction that emphasizes

- organization of internal elements (a beginning, middle, and end for each idea and not just for the total paper);
- elaboration of all supporting details; and
- precision and maturity of word choice.

5 Points

According to the rubric, the writing is focused, and supporting ideas are adequately developed. However, lapses in organization may occur. Word choice is adequate. Sentences vary in structure, and conventions are generally correct.

In most cases, the writing could be improved by instruction that emphasizes

- strengthening the organizational pattern to ensure that no lapses occur and that transitional devices move the reader from one sentence, event, or explanation to the next;
- elaborating the supporting details;
- improving word choice; and
- increasing sentence variety.

4 Points

According to the rubric, the writing is focused but may contain extraneous information, may lack internal organization, and may include weak support or examples. Word choice is adequate. Sentences vary in construction, and conventions are generally correct.

In most cases, the writing could be improved by instruction that emphasizes

- removing extraneous information;

- strengthening the organizational pattern to ensure that no lapses occur and that transitional devices move the reader from one sentence, event, or explanation to the next;
- developing the supporting ideas through extensions, elaborations, or both;
- improving word choice; and
- increasing sentence variety.

3 Points

According to the rubric, the writing is generally focused but may contain extraneous information, a simplistic organizational pattern, and undeveloped details or examples. Word choice is adequate. Most sentences are simple construction, and convention errors may occur.

In most cases, the writing could be improved by instruction that emphasizes

- removing extraneous information;
- developing an organizational pattern that includes a beginning, middle, end, and transitional devices;
- developing the supporting ideas through extensions, elaborations, or both;
- improving word choice; and
- increasing sentence variety.

2 Points

According to the rubric, the writing may show little relationship to the topic, little evidence of an organizational pattern, and little relevant support. Word choice is limited. Most sentences are simple construction, and convention errors may occur.

In most cases, the writing could be improved by instruction that emphasizes

- focusing on the assigned topic;
- developing an organizational pattern that includes a beginning, middle, end, and transitional devices;
- extending supporting ideas;
- improving word choice;

- increasing sentence variety; and
- correcting spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence structure errors.

1 Point

According to the rubric, the writing minimally addresses the topic. There is no organizational pattern and little or no support. Word choice is limited. Most sentences are simple construction, and convention errors may occur.

In most cases, the writing could be improved by instruction that emphasizes

- focusing on the assigned topic;
- developing an organizational pattern that includes a beginning, middle, and end;
- extending supporting ideas;
- improving word choice;
- increasing sentence variety; and
- correcting spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence structure errors.

Unscorable – Response Not Related to Assigned Topic

According to the rubric, the writing did not address the assigned topic. This score category is not a statement about the quality of the writing; instead it is a statement about the focus of the writing.

The writing could be improved by instruction that emphasizes focusing on the assigned topic.

Unscorable – No Response or Unreadable Response

According to the rubric, there was no response or an unreadable response.

The writing could be improved by instruction that emphasizes

- arranging words so that meaning is conveyed or
- writing a sufficient amount and addressing the prompt so that scoring is facilitated.

APPENDIX H

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Atwell, Nancy. *Coming to Know: Writing to Learn in the Intermediate Grades.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1990.

This is a book for teachers who are ready to put writing to work across the curriculum – to abandon the encyclopedia-based approach and ask their students to write as literary critics, scientists, historians, and mathematicians.

Atwell, Nancy. *In the Middle: Writing, Reading, and Learning with Adolescents.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1990.

This is a convincing account of Atwell's experiences in an eighth grade classroom. She shares her discoveries about what is wrong with traditional methods of teaching reading and writing to middle school students and her thoughts about what is helpful in classroom workshops for young readers and writers.

Calkins, Lucy McCormick. *The Art of Teaching Writing.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1986.

Readers will learn from Calkins how teachers can help K-6 students use the writing process and improve their writing.

Calkins, Lucy McCormick. *Lessons from a Child.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1983.

In this story of one child's growth in writing, Calkins describes a workshop approach to teaching writing that has spread to classrooms around the country.

Calkins, Lucy McCormick and Shelly Harwayne. *Living Between the Lines.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1990.

This is an invitation to bring new life into reading-writing workshops. This book weaves insights, practical suggestions, references, and anecdotes into an inspirational story.

Caplan, Rebekah. *Writers in Training.* Palo Alto, CA: Dale Seymour Publications, 1985.

In this practical handbook on techniques and activities, Caplan outlines her "Show not Tell" approach for descriptive essays, strategies for argumentative essays, and her many other ideas for good writing.

Clark, Roy Peter. *Free to Write.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1987.

This book answers questions about how to work writing into the curriculum, how to create a classroom environment that encourages writing, how to conference with students about their writing, and how to get students to revise and edit their work.

Dean, Rosemary and Marie Ponsot. *Beat Not the Poor Desk: Writing – What to Teach, How to Teach It, and Why.* Upper Montclair, NJ: Boynton and Cook, 1982.

This book presents a revolutionary, inductive approach to teaching composition. It helps students develop elemental skills, not by drill, but by incremental repetition of integrated writing assignments.

Dean, Rosemary and Marie Ponsot. *The Common Sense.* Upper Montclair, NJ: Boynton and Cook, 1985.

This book focuses on the expository essay in an active composing class and stresses the importance of reading aloud.

Elbow, Peter. *Writing Without Teachers.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Elbow's program for learning how to write also works for teachers. Chapter 4 describes how teachers can set up peer response groups in their classrooms.

Elbow, Peter. *Writing With Power.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Through a broad spectrum of ingenious ideas, this book shows how to develop students' natural writing ability.

Florida Department of Education. *Florida Writes!* Tallahassee, FL: Author, 1999.

Florida Writes! Report on the 1999 Assessment, Grade 4; Florida Writes! Report on the 1999 Assessment, Grade 8; and *Florida Writes! Report on the 1999 Assessment, Grade 10* describe the development, purpose, content, and application of the writing assessment program, and they suggest activities that are helpful in preparing students for the assessment.

Gallo, Donald R. *Speaking for Ourselves.* Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1990.

This book includes autobiographical sketches of notable authors of young adult books.

Goodman, Kenneth S., Yetta M. Goodman, and Wendy J. Hood. *The Whole Language Evaluation Book.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1989.

In order to answer questions about how to evaluate students in a whole language classroom, the authors use ideas that are grounded in proven methods.

Gordon, Naomi, ed. *Classroom Experiences: The Writing Process in Action.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1983.

This is a collection of articles written by teachers who give accounts of their successes in teaching writing.

Graves, Donald. *Writing: Teachers and Children at Work.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1983.

This book has become the basic text in the movement that established writing as a central part of literacy education and gave impetus to the whole language approach.

Irvin, Judith. *Reading and the Middle School Student.* Old Tappan, NJ: Allyn and Bacon, 1990.

Significant advances in literacy teaching and learning form a backdrop for this engaging discussion of what middle-level educators need to know to design a successful reading program.

Kiester, Jane Bell. *Caught 'Ya.* Gainesville, FL: Maupin House, 1990.

This is a how-to book that describes a fun and motivational approach to teaching mechanics and usage through a daily revision activity.

Kirby, Dan and Tom Liner. *Inside Out.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1988.

This is a widely used teacher text about helping junior and senior high students learn to write. This book dispels long-held myths and offers fresh insights.

Moffett, James. *Active Voice: A Writing Program Across the Curriculum,* 2nd ed. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1992.

This is a program of writing assignments based on ideas presented in *Teaching the Universe of Discourse* and *Coming on Center.* This edition includes a new chapter, "Bridges: From Personal Writing to Formal Essay."

Murray, Donald. *The Craft of Revision.* Fort Worth, TX: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1991.

This is an excellent book about the writing process.

Murray, Donald. *Expecting the Unexpected: Teaching Myself and Others to Read and Write.* Upper Montclair, NJ: Boynton and Cook, 1982.

The 24 articles in this collection show the range of Murray's interests and concerns as he looks at writing from the writer's as well as the teacher's experience.

Murray, Donald. *Learning by Teaching.* Upper Montclair, NJ: Boynton and Cook, 1982.

This is an excellent book about the writing process.

Nathan, Ruth, Frances Temple, Kathleen Juntenen, and Charles Temple. *Classroom Strategies That Work: An Elementary Teacher's Guide to Process Writing.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1988.

Classroom Strategies is for teachers who are interested in using process writing but need detailed suggestions for getting started. This book discusses many ways to enrich and inform young writers.

Newkirk, Thomas. *Critical Thinking and Writing: Reclaiming the Essay.* Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1989.

The author shares his doubts about the thesis-controlled essay and his ideas for the critical-thinking essay.

Newman, Judith M., ed. *Whole Language: Theory in Use.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1985.

Through its 18 chapters, many of which are written by practicing teachers, this book shows how whole language theory can be put into practice.

Parsons, Les. *Response Journals.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1990.

Teachers are taken step by step through a system for using response journals. This book includes ready-to-use pages and students' sample responses.

Perl, Sondra and Nancy Wilson. *Through Teachers' Eyes.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1988.

The authors spent two years living in the homes of the classroom teachers they observed, teachers who daily faced the challenge of teaching writing.

Rico, Gabriel Lusser. *Writing the Natural Way.* Los Angeles, CA: J.P. Tarcher, Inc., 1983.

In a practical way, Rico applies important brain research to the teaching of writing. She explains how clustering can be used to find and explore topics and how visuals can be used in the drafting and organizing stages.

Rief, Linda. *Seeking Diversity: Language Arts with Adolescents.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1992.

Rief discusses the mechanics of writing and reading workshops in a traditional middle school setting and her solutions to the difficulties of teaching process writing and reading to 125 students a day, five days a week.

Romano, Tom. *Clearing the Way: Working with Teenage Writers.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1987.

Romano, a ninth grade English teacher for many years, discusses the theory and practice of process writing, methods for grading, respect for student writing, and many other useful topics in a very enthusiastic and readable style.

Routman, Regie. *Invitations.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1991.

This book begins where Routman's *Transitions* leaves off. *Invitations* provides in-depth information and step-by-step lessons on such topics as shared reading and writing and journal writing.

Routman, Regie. *Transitions: From Literature to Literacy.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1988.

This book is designed to present alternatives to skill-oriented basal texts and to provide teachers and parents with the knowledge necessary to make the change.

Ruth, Leo and Sandra Murphy. *Designing Writing Tasks for the Assessment of Writing.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1988.

This is an essential primer for people who are just beginning to develop a large-scale writing assessment program.

Smith, Frank. *Essays Into Literacy.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1983.

This book contains a number of Smith's classic papers, such as "Twelve Easy Ways to Make Learning to Read Difficult," and some new articles.

Spandel, Vicki and Richard J. Stiggins. *Creating Writers: Linking Assessment and Writing Instruction.* White Plains, NY: Longman, 1990.

This book demonstrates that links can and should exist between the instruction and the assessment of writing.

Stires, Susan, ed. *With Promise: Redefining Reading and Writing Needs for Special Students.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1991.

Teachers and researchers confront such issues as labeling, testing, programming, and developing skills for "special" and "at-risk" students in elementary and middle schools. They describe positive environments and holistic approaches for reading and writing.

Tierney, Robert J., Mark Carter, and Laura Desal. *Portfolio Assessment in the Reading/Writing Classroom.* Norwood, MD: Christopher Gordon, Inc., 1991.

This book answers many questions about portfolio assessment and suggests methods for portfolio self-assessment.

Trelease, Jim. *The Read-Aloud Handbook*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1982.

This book gives suggestions for Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) and for reading aloud. An annotated bibliography of children's literature is included.

White, Edward M. *Teaching and Assessing Writing*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Inc. Publishers, 1985.

White provides the fundamental skills teachers need to design and evaluate writing assignments and to guide students toward improved writing skills.

Yancy, Kathleen, ed. *Portfolios in the Writing Classroom: An Introduction*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1992.

Classroom teachers from various backgrounds reflect on how using portfolios has shaped their teaching. They discuss ways to introduce portfolios into the classroom, and they describe various models and practices for portfolio projects.

Zemelman, Steven and Harvey Daniels. *A Community of Writers: Teaching Writing in the Junior and Senior High School*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books, 1988.

This book offers detailed guidance for all aspects of teaching and using writing, from workshop methods to grammar instruction and evaluation.

Zinsser, William. *On Writing Well*, 4th edition. New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1990.

This is a helpful and readable guide to writing.

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